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PTQ9245

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ACTION SCT-00

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-17	ACDE-00	AID-00	ARA-01	A-00	CA-02
	CCO-00	CG-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	COME-00	CTME-00	OASY-00
	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-01	EUR-01
	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	H-01	IMMC-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00
	L-01	ADS-00	M-00	NEA-01	NRCE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OCS-03	OIS-01	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-00	PRS-01	P-01
	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	USSS-00
	ASDS-01	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-09	G-00	/044W	
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7008
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BUENOS AIRES 004382

E.O. 12356: DECL: 7/21/00
TAGS: PGOV, PTER, AR
SUBJECT: AMIA INVESTIGATION MOVING AHEAD, SLOWLY

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.
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2. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOMBING ATTACK OF THE JEWISH MUTUAL ASSOCIATION OF ARGENTINA (REPORTED SEPTEL), EMBOFFS SPOKE WITH JUDGE JUAN JOSE GALEANO WHO HEADS THE INVESTIGATION. WHILE UPBEAT ON THE COOPERATION AMONG GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED, GALEANO EVADED TALKING ABOUT CONCRETE RESULTS IN THE INVESTIGATION. GALEANO, WHO HAS LIMITED RESOURCES HE CAN MUSTER TO SIFT THE MOUNTAIN OF INFORMATION COLLECTED IN THE CASE, FEARS THAT ARGENTINA MAY HAVE TO RELEASE SEVEN SUSPECTS NOW BEING EXTRADITED FROM PARAGUAY UNLESS EVIDENCE LINKING THEM TO THE AMIA EXPLOSION OR OTHER ATTACKS CAN BE PRESENTED IN COURT. END SUMMARY.

3. EMBOFFS MET JULY 19 WITH JUDGE JUAN JOSE GALEANO TO REVIEW PROGRESS IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THE JEWISH MUTUAL ASSOCIATION OF ARGENTINA (AMIA) CASE AND TO OBTAIN GALEANO'S VIEWS ON THE MEDIA ATTENTION HIS OFFICE HAD BEEN RECEIVING DURING THE WEEK LEADING UP TO THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOMBING. AMIA WAS DESTROYED ON JULY 18, 1994.

4. GALEANO WAS UPBEAT ON THE LEVEL OF COOPERATION THAT EXISTED AMONG THE VARIOUS ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT OFFICES PARTICIPATING IN THE INVESTIGATION, CLAIMING THAT INFORMATION SHARING WAS CRITICAL TO A SUCCESSFUL INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS. YET OTHER SOURCES TELL US THAT GALEANO IS VIEWED WITH SUSPICION OR DISDAIN BY SOME WITHIN THE ARGENTINE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AND THAT MUCH OF THE "COOPERATION" HE HAS RECEIVED HAS BEEN EITHER WINDOW-DRESSING, OR THE MINIMUM REQUIRED TO KEEP HIM
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SATISFIED AND OUT OF OTHER PEOPLE'S HAIR.
INTERESTINGLY, GALEANO AVOIDED MAKING DIRECT COMMENTS ON ANY CONCRETE ASPECTS OF THE INVESTIGATION OR SPECIFIC RESULTS OBTAINED.

5. GALEANO FRETTERED ABOUT THE SCARCITY OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO HIS OFFICE. HE CITED, FOR EXAMPLE, THE LIMITED STAFF ASSIGNED TO THE CASE, CURRENTLY EIGHT, COMPARED WITH THE IMMENSE AMOUNT OF INFORMATION THAT MUST BE SIFTED THROUGH AND PROCESSED TO FOLLOW UP

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INVESTIGATIVE LEADS. BESIDES AMIA, HIS DOCKET STILL HAS ROUGHLY 200 OTHER CASES. TWO-THIRDS OF HIS STAFF OF THIRTY REMAIN FOCUSED ON DISPOSING OF AS MANY OF THOSE CASES AS POSSIBLE. THE OTHERS WORK FULL-TIME ON AMIA. HE SPENDS MOST OF HIS TIME ON AMIA AS WELL. WHILE NOT BEING ASSIGNED NEW CASES FOR NOW, HE IS SCHEDULED TO RETURN TO THE REGULAR DOCKET ROTATION IN DECEMBER. GALEANO ADDED THAT TECHNICAL PROBLEMS ABOUND. A LACK OF QUALIFIED FARSI SPEAKERS, FOR INSTANCE, MEANT THAT THE TRANSCRIPTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH IRANIANS HAD TO BE SENT OUT OF THE COUNTRY FOR TRANSLATION, DELAYING INFORMATION THAT MIGHT -- IN GALEANO'S VIEW -- EVENTUALLY BECOME CRITICAL TO THE INVESTIGATION. A LACK OF FUNDING PREVENTED HIS OFFICE FROM CONDUCTING A FULL AND COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE "CHOP-SHOP" GARAGE SUSPECTED OF BEING THE PLACE WHERE THE TERRORISTS BOUGHT THE VAN USED IN THE ATTACK. ALTHOUGH GALEANO WAS CLEARLY FEELING PUBLIC PRESSURE FOR RESULTS AND RECENTLY HAD BEEN THE SUBJECT OF MUCH CRITICISM IN THE MEDIA, HE APPEARED AT EASE IN HIS OFFICE AND SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH HIS STAFF'S

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WORK TO DATE, KNOWING THAT THEY WERE DOING THE BEST
THEY COULD WITH THE RESOURCES AT HAND.

6. ASKED ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE SEVEN SOON-TO-BE-EXTRADITED SUSPECTS NOW IN PARAGUAY, GALEANO SAID HE DOUBTED THE ARGENTINE JUDICIAL SYSTEM COULD DETAIN THEM FOR MORE THAN A BRIEF PERIOD UNLESS INFORMATION LINKING THEM TO THE AMIA BOMBING OR OTHER ATTACKS WERE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE COURTS. IN A SEPARATE JULY 19 CONVERSATION, A STAFFER IN THE OFFICE OF ROBERTO MARQUEVICH, GALEANO'S JUDICIAL COLLEAGUE AND THE MAN

RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EXTRADITION CASE, CONFIRMED THAT THE SEVEN ARE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN ARGENTINA JULY 23. GALEANO EXPLAINED THAT ONCE THEY ARRIVE IN THE COUNTRY AND ARE PLACED IN ARGENTINE CUSTODY, MARQUEVICH WILL HAVE A VERY LIMITED TIME TO SHOW WHY THEY SHOULD BE HELD IN CUSTODY. ONCE THE CLOCK STARTS TICKING MARQUEVICH WILL BE UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE TO SHOW

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RESULTS. TIME MAY EXPIRE, SAID GALEANO, AS EARLY AS THE FIRST OR SECOND WEEK OF AUGUST UNLESS REASONABLE CAUSE COULD BE ESTABLISHED TO DETAIN THEM LONGER. GALEANO CLAIMED NOT TO HAVE RECEIVED ANY INFORMATION TO DATE ON THE INTERROGATIONS OF THE ASUNCION SEVEN.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BUENOS AIRES 004382

E.O. 12356: DECL: 7/21/00

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7. COMMENT: THE GOA CHOSE TO WORK WITH JUDGE
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MARKEVICH, WHO IS CONSIDERED MORE RELIABLE, ON THE
EXTRADITION CASE. SECURITY AGENCIES DO NOT TRUST
GALEANO GIVEN HIS PAST TENDENCY TO GO PUBLIC ON THE
COURSE OF HIS INVESTIGATION. END COMMENT.

GODARD

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